REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the previous amendments and the following remarks.

The present application is directed to a data processing apparatus including one or more inputs, one or more outputs, a controller and a plurality of compressing/expanding devices. The apparatus processes jobs, e.g., print jobs. Some of these jobs are not required to be output without delay, and some are. If a job is not required to be outputted without delay, the job is of the type that has a user-initiated delay between its input and its output. As discussed in paragraphs [0046] and [0047] of the application, some embodiments of this type of job are stored print job and certain fax print jobs. As further discussed in paragraph [0048], the type of job can be determined based on the data structure of the job.

Fig. 3 illustrates the operation of an embodiment of the apparatus. As described in paragraphs [0053] through [0057] and illustrated in Steps S301 through S305, for a new job, it is first determined whether the job is not required to be outputted without delay. If the job is not required to be outputted without delay, three of the compressing/expanding devices are assigned to process the job, during which the fourth compressing/expanding device is available for processing of another job, as described in paragraph [0058] and illustrated in Step S306. If the job is required to be outputted without delay, all four compressing/expanding devices are assigned to process the job, during which all four of said plurality of compressing/expanding devices are unavailable for processing of another job, as described in paragraph [0059] and illustrated in Step S307. Of course, the claimed invention is not limited to the disclosed embodiments.

Claim 1, the only non-withdrawn independent claim, is rejected on the disclosure of Mishima.

As amended, Claim 1 recites a data processing apparatus comprising, among other elements, at least one input portion, at least one output portion, a plurality of compressing/expanding devices, a job discrimination portion which discriminates whether a job inputted from an input portion is not required to be outputted without delay; and a controller which controls operation assignment of the plurality of compressing/expanding devices depending on a discrimination result of the job discrimination portion and activates assigned compressing/expanding devices for the job.

Mishima discloses a compression and expansion apparatus. As discussed in lines 1-24 of column 5 of Mishima, input image data is compressed and output image data is expanded by expansion/compression processors 506-509 of memory unit 13. As further discussed in lines 25-54 of column 5, the expansion/compression processors 506-509 are each assigned for expansion or compression based on the respective amounts of image data being input and output.

In rejecting Claim 1, the Examiner appears to have taken the position that the state of image data being simultaneously compressed by all of the expansion processors corresponds to a job which is not required to be outputted without delay because this storing is allegedly for a job that is held until it is needed to be expanded and printed. Applicants disagree with this position.

Lines 55-61 of Mishima exemplify when image data is simultaneously compressed by all of the expansion processors. For a print job comprising M copies of N documents, all four processors are set for compression only while the N

<u>documents are read</u>. Then, two of the processors are set for expansion. Accordingly, there is no delay in printing the first document of the job, even though the first document is processed in the state that all four processors are set for compression. In other words, if multiple copies are to be printed, the image data may be stored (for purposes of printing second and later copies), even though printing of the first copy will begin without delay.

Accordingly, Claim 1 is allowable over Mishima, and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 based on the disclosure of Mishima is respectfully requested.

The dependent claims are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence from allowable Claim 1, and disclose additional patentably distinguishing features. For example, new Claim 31 recites that the delay comprises a user-initiated delay. Mishima does not disclose a user-initiated delay.

Early and favorable action with respect to this application is respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful

in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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